

16:1 [Then spoke] Adonai to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron when they drew close to the presence of YHWH and died.
2 And said Adonai, [to Moses]: “[You must now speak] to Aaron your brother
[that he not go in] at any time to the sanctuary beyond [the dividing wall],
in front of the cover [that is on top] of the ark, so that he should not die; for it is [in a cloud] [that I make myself seen] [over the ark].
3 [In this way] will come Aaron into the sanctuary:
[with a bull]—[a young one of the herd]—[for a *chattat*] (sin offering), and a ram for an *olah* (burnt offering).
4 A linen tunic that is consecrated—[this he must put on]. [Also pants of linen] should be against his body.
With a sash of linen [he will gird himself], and with a turban of linen [cover his head].
[Vestments sacred] are these. [Only when washed] [by way of water] [is his body], [may he don them].
5 [From within] the assembly of the children of Israel, [he is to take] two goats (that is, he-goats)—[for a *chattat*].
And a ram, a single one, as an *olah*.
6 [Then he must bring this]:—[Aaron must present] a goat for a *chattat* [for himself],
to atone for himself, and for his household.
7 He must take both [of the he-goats], [and he must] [set them] before YHWH, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.
8 [Then he must set down]—[Aaron must then place]—on the two goats *goralot* (lots),
[one lot to be] designated [”for YHWH”], the other lot [marked ”for *Azazel*”].
9 [Then must present] Aaron the goat—the one [on which] [there had been placed] the *goral* for YHWH, [that it may be prepared] as a *chattat*.
10 [Whereas the goat]—[the other one]—on which was placed the *goral* for *Azazel* [will remain alive] before YHWH [to make atonement] upon it,
[and to] [send it away] to *Azazel* in the desert.

16:11 Then must present Aaron the goat [for the sin offering] [that is meant for him],
and atone for himself and for his household. [He must then slay] the bull for the *chattat*, [the one that is his own].
12 He (Aaron) [shall take a full fire pan] [of coals aglow with fire] from the side of the altar that is before YHWH,
[and his cupped] handfuls of fragrant incense, finely-ground [and bring it] inside the curtain.
13 [He will then proceed] [to place the incense] on the fire, before YHWH,
[so that covered] | by [the cloud of incense]—[is the cover of the ark] that is over the (tablets of) testimony. Thus he will not die.
14 He will take some blood from the bull [and sprinkle it around] [with his finger] in front of the ark cover, eastward.
And there [before the ark cover] [he then must sprinkle] [a full seven times] some of the blood with his finger.
15 [He will then slay] the goat [for the sin offering], that is the people's, and bring [that goat's blood] to the inside of the curtain,
and do [with its blood] [just as] he did [with the blood] of the bull
[and thus he must] [sprinkle this blood] [over the ark cover] and in front of the ark cover.
16 [Thus will he atone] [there in the sanctuary] for the defilements of the children of Israel, their transgressions [and all their sins].
Thus he will do in the Tent of Meeting, which dwells [among them] even [in the midst of their *tum'ot*] (defilements).
17 [No one else] [is allowed to be] | in [the Tent of Meeting] [from the time he goes inside] to make atonement in the sanctuary,
[until he comes out]. He will atone for himself and on behalf of his household, [end aliyah] [and on behalf of] the whole community of Israel.
18 [He will then go out] [and go to the altar] that stands before YHWH [and make atonement] [upon it].
[And he will take] some of the blood from the bull and some blood from the he-goat, [and place it upon] the horns of the altar, all around.
19 He will sprinkle [there upon it] [from the remaining blood] with his finger a full [seven times].
Thus he will purify and hallow it, from the defilements of the children of Israel.
20 [When Aaron has finished] atoning in the sanctuary, in the Tent of Meeting, and at the altar, [he must bring forth] the goat that is still alive.
21 Then Aaron will lean both [of his hands] on the head of the goat, [the one that is alive],
and confess [there upon it] all the faults of the children of Israel, all their transgressions, [and all their sins].
[He will place them] upon the head of the goat, [and then send it off] by the hand of the man chosen, into the desert.
22 [Thus will carry] the goat [all upon itself] all their sins to a land [that is cut off], as he sends the goat into the wilderness.

16:23 [Then will enter] Aaron the Tent of Meeting [and strip off] his garments of linen which he put on when he entered [the holy place], and leave them there.

24 He will wash his body with water in a place that is holy; then put on [his other clothes] [and he will go out] and make his burnt offering and the offering of the people, [end aliyah] thus atoning for himself, and on behalf of the people.

25 [And the choicest parts]—the fat of the *chattat* he shall burn on the altar.

26 [The one who sent off] the goat to *Azazel* must scrub his clothing and wash his body with water. After that he may re-enter the camp.

27 [And besides], the bull of the *chattat* [in addition to] the goat—[the one that was offered up] of which were brought the blood for atonement in the sanctuary [must be taken] out [side the camp]. [Then must be burned] in fire their skins, and their flesh, and their entrails.

28 [He who does the burning] [of them] must scrub his garments and wash his body in water. After this, he may re-enter the camp.

29 It will be for you a law for the ages: in month [the seventh—the month of Tishrei], on the tenth of the month, you must [afflict your souls]. [Any kind of work] you must not do; both the native [and the alien] who dwells among you.

30 [Because on *this* day]—[on this very day]—will be atonement for you, to purify you from all of your sins. Before YHWH, you will be cleansed.

31 Sabbath of sabbaths it will be to you. [You will afflict] your souls. It is a law for all time.

32 You will be atoned through the *cohen* [since they have] [anointed him] [and have] filled his hand (*i.e.* ordained him) to act as priest in the place of his father. [He is to dress] in garments of linen: clothes that are holy.

33 [He will perform atonement] in the *mikdash*—[the holy place]. [And in the tent]—[the Tent of Meeting] [and at the altar] he will make atonement. [And also for] [the other *cohanim*] and for the whole community, [he will atone].

34 This will be for you a law [for all time]: [in order to atone] for the children of Israel [from all of their sins], [one time] [in the year]. [And Aaron did] [just as it was] [end aliyah] commanded by YHWH [to Moses].

17:1 (Then spoke YHWH) to Moses saying,
 2 (Speak to Aaron) [and to his sons], and to all the children of Israel, and say to them, “This is the word that was commanded by YHWH, saying,
 3 Whatsoever man of the house of Israel who should slaughter a bull [or a sheep] [or a goat] [inside the camp],
 [or indeed] if he should slaughter outside the camp,
 4 [and to the entrance] of [the Tent of Meeting] [he does not] [bring it], [to bring it forth] as an offering to YHWH,
 before the *mishkan* (*tabernacle*) of God, as blood [it shall be counted] [to the man] [who did this]—blood he has spilled.
 [He will be cut off]—the man who did this—from the midst of his people.
 5 [This is in order] that they should bring—the children of Israel—their sacrifices, the ones that they [have been slaying] in [the open field]
 [and bring them] [to YHWH] [at the entrance] of the Tent of Meeting, to the priest,
 where they can be offered [as sacrifices] [of well-being] to YHWH—[thus they may be offered].
 6 [Then will cast]—the priest [will dash the blood] on the altar of YHWH at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting,
 [turning to smoke] [the choice parts] as a pleasing fragrance to YHWH.
 7 [That they do not offer] any longer their sacrifices [to the goat-demons] (the *se'irim*): [the gods of whom] they go whoring [after them]—
 a statute [for all time] [end aliyah] this will be for them [for all generations].
 8 To them [you must say], “Whatsoever man from the house of Israel [or from the aliens] who reside [among them],
 who prepares an *olah* (burnt offering) or a sacrifice,
 9 [but to the entrance] of the Tent of Meeting [does not] [bring it], to present it to YHWH,
 [he shall be cut off]—the person who did this—[from his people].
 10 And any person—[either from] [*Beit Yisrael*] [or from the aliens] that dwell [among them]—if that person should eat any blood,
 [then I] [will set my face] [against that person] (*nefesh*) who eats the blood. I will cut him off from the midst of his people,
 11 [because the life-force] (the *nefesh*) [of the flesh] in the blood resides.
 [And as for Me], [I gave it] to you [on the altar] to atone [for your lives], since blood is the thing that for a *nefesh* atones.
 12 [This is why] I have said to the children of Israel: (No *nefesh* among you [may consume] blood.
 [And also the alien] who dwells among you may not eat blood.

17:13 And any person from the children of Israel [or from the aliens] that dwell [among you] who should hunt down as prey—[whether it be a beast] or a bird—as game [that may be eaten]—[he must spill out] the blood, [and cover it] with earth.

14 [Because for the *nefesh*]—[the life of all flesh]—its blood [is one with the *nefesh*]—[with the life-force].

Hence I say to *B'nei Yisrael*: the blood of all flesh, [you may not eat], [since the life-force] of all flesh is its blood. [Whoever eats it], [will be cut off].

15 [Any any person] who eats an animal that has died [or was torn by beasts], whether a native or an alien, must launder his clothing [and bathe] [himself in water]. He is unclean until evening, [and is then clean].

16 And if he does not wash, and his body he does not bathe, then he bears his guilt.”

18:1 Then spoke YHWH to Moses, saying,

2 [You must speak] to the children of Israel [and say this] to them, “I am YHWH your God.

3 [To follow the ways] [of the land of *Mitzraim*] in which you once lived, [this you] [must not do].

[And as to the ways] [of the land of Canaan]—

the place of which [I am] [bringing you] there: [these you] [must not follow], [and by their laws] you shall not walk.

4 [It is my rules alone] [that you must keep], my decrees you must follow, walking by them. I am YHWH your God.

5 [You must keep] My laws and My judgments, which [by doing] [what they demand], a person will live [through them].

[end aliyah] [For indeed], I am YHWH.

6 [As for] any person—[towards any kin] [of his flesh], must not approach to uncover their nakedness. I am YHWH.

7 The nakedness [of your father], being* the nakedness of your mother, you must not uncover. *See Robert Alter

[Since your mother] she is: do not uncover her nakedness.

8 The nakedness of the wife of your father, you must not uncover. The nakedness of your father, it is.

9 The nakedness [of your sister]—[daughter of your father]—or [daughter of your mother],

[whether one born] in the household, or one born outside—you must not uncover her nakedness.

10 The nakedness [of your son's daughter] or [your daughter's daughter]—you must not uncover her nakedness, since your own nakedness it is.

11 The nakedness of a daughter [of your father's wife], offspring of your father—your sister she is. You must not uncover her nakedness.

18:12 The nakedness of your father's sister, you must not uncover, since your father's blood relative she is.
 13 The nakedness of your mother's sister, you must not uncover, since your mother's blood relative she is.
 14 The nakedness of your father's brother, you must not uncover, and his wife you must not [come near], [since your aunt] is she.
 15 The nakedness of your daughter-in-law, you must not uncover. The wife of your son she is. Do not uncover her nakedness.
 16 The nakedness of your brother's wife, you must not uncover, since the nakedness of your brother it is.
 17 The nakedness [of a woman] [and of her daughter], you must not uncover. [Even the daughter of her son] [or the daughter of her daughter] you [must not take] to uncover her nakedness. Blood relatives they are; a perversion it is.
 18 Both a woman and her sister, you [shall not take],
 [lest they become rivals], [if you should expose] [the sister's nakedness], [besides that of the woman], [while the latter is still alive].
 19 To a woman in her *niddah* impurity (menstrual separation) you must not come near, to uncover her nakedness.
 20 [To the wife] [of your fellow man] do not give your emission of seed, [to become *tamei* (unclean) through her].
 21 Your seed do not give, to pass over to Moloch. [Because you must not] [in this manner profane] [end aliyah] the name of your God. I am YHWH.
 22 [And with another male] you must not lie [as one lies] with a woman. An abhorrence it is.
 23 [And with any beast] do not give your emission, [becoming *tamei* thereby].
 [And likewise, a woman] [is not to stand]—[presenting herself] [before a beast], [lying with it]. A perversion it is.
 24 Do not be defiled [through all these], [because through] [all of these] were defiled the nations that I am casting out [before you].
 25 [Thus was defiled] the land, and I visited its iniquity [upon it]. Spewed out by the land [were its inhabitants].
 26 Hence observe—[you surely must keep]—My statutes and My laws, and you [shall not practice] the perversions [we just named]:
 [neither the native] [nor the alien] who dwells in your midst.
 27 [Since all] [these perversions] [we spoke of] were done by the people of the land who came [before you], thus defiling the land.
 28 [Not spewed out] by the land, [will you be], [by your defiling] of it, [the way that] [it did spew out] the nation that was before you.
 29 Because whosoever does all these perversions [we speak of], [there shall be cut off] the people who do them, from the midst of their people.
 30 You must observe [that which I charge], that you not observe the ways so perverted that were done [before you];
 that you not be defiled by them. [end aliyah] I am YHWH your God.

Len Fellman's English readings with tropes

The purpose of this project is to translate *THE SONG OF THE TORAH* into English.

I work by comparing as many as ten English translations of a *pasuk* and creating a cantillated English sentence that sounds as much as possible like the Hebrew. They follow the Hebrew as closely as possible, word for word and trope by trope. The English language has an amazing flexibility, making it possible to make the English word order match that of the Hebrew quite well, allowing for some “poetic licence”, and some willingness on the part of the listener to be “carried” by the melody more than by the English syntax. The translation needs to sound good when *chanted*, but not necessarily when *spoken or read*.

Unlike most translations, these “transtropilations” are not intended to be a substitute for the Hebrew. On the contrary, they are meant to provide a “window” into the Hebrew text and its musical expression. My ideal listener knows enough Hebrew and has enough interest to follow the Hebrew in a bilingual text while the *leyner* is chanting the English version, to bring the Hebrew text to life, both *verbally* and *musically*. For this purpose I use *exactly* the same tropes in the English as in the Hebrew (almost always on the corresponding English word).

The texts can be used to do **consecutive translation**, i.e. leyning a phrase in Hebrew, followed by the corresponding phrase sung in English. Some of my recordings demonstrate this. I do this frequently when leyning for groups that either know little Hebrew, or that don't have a *chumash* in front of them.

I favor literal translations (e.g. “cut a covenant”) to call attention to Hebrew idioms, and towards simpler (even if less accurate) words (e.g. Ex. 12:7 “beam above the door” rather than “lintel”) to be easier to follow. If my readings provoke a discussion of the Hebrew, I consider that as justification for using less-than-idiomatic English. I try to find just the right balance between “literalness” and “listenable-ness”. A primary goal is throwing light on the Hebrew syntax.

In order to adapt the trope symbols to a left-to-right language like English, I *reversed* the direction of the trope symbols:

mercha tipcha munach tevir mapakh or yetiv kadma or pashta gersh gershayim telisha katana telisha gedola

(Generally speaking the *conjunctive tropes* such as mercha, munach, mapakh, kadma, and telisha katana “lean toward” the words they “conjoin” to, while the *disjunctive tropes* such as tipcha, gersh, gershayim, and telisha gedola “lean away” from the words that follow, so as to create a sense of separation.)

The trope symbol is normally placed under the accented syllable, unless it is a *pre-positive* accent (telisha gedola, placed *at the beginning* of the word or phrase) or a *post-positive* one (telisha katana or pashta, placed at the *end* of the word or phrase).

The Hebrew text frequently puts a *makkeph* (which is like a hyphen) between words in order to treat them as a single word to be chanted. I use a different system for English: If an entire English phrase is to be chanted to a single trope melody, I place it between grey brackets, as in this phrase from the Book of Lamentations:

[clings to her skirts]

The *leyner* is invited to fit this phrase to the *Eicha* “rivi'i” melody in whatever way seems most natural.

As a variant of the “grey bracket” device, I indicate the following pairs of tropes by “wrapping them around” the phrase which will have the combined melody:

mercha/tipcha	kadma/geresh (or: azla, etc.)	mercha siluk
Renew our days	She weeps bitterly	a fire-offering to God

Again, the *leyner* should decide on the most natural way to fit the phrase to the combined trope melody.

I put words in gray which I consider essential but which don’t strictly match the Hebrew. I also “pad” some phrases with extra words in gray to fill out a musical phrase nicely. Different trope systems vary widely in the length of the musical phrase used, so the words in gray may or not be used depending on the *leyner*’s cantillation system. In particular, the tropes *telisha g’dola* (ר), *legarmeh*, *metigah-zakef*, and *pazer* vary widely in the musical phrases used for chanting. (And please indulge me in my whimsical treatments of *shalshelet*.)

“*Metigah-zakef*” is a special trope combination which can be recognized by a kadma and a zakef katon appearing on the same Hebrew word (again, a *makkeph* makes two words into one). (There are several examples in Genesis 18 & 19, beginning with 18:16). I indicate this by placing the corresponding English phrase in grey brackets:

[Take heed—take care for yourself]

In some trope systems (notably cantor Moshe Haschel in “Navigating the Bible II”) this is given a very distinctive melody—for which purpose extra syllables fill out the musical phrase (as in “take care” in this example). Haschel’s system also chants the trope *munach* as *legarmeh* more often than other systems do.

I don’t write a single word of translation without first hearing the melody of the phrase in my mind, following one of two trope systems: The one by Portnoy and Wolff (*The Art of Cantillation*) or the one by Joshua R. Jacobson (*Chanting the Hebrew Bible*).

I transcribe the name יהוה as YHWH (in small caps). I almost always chant this as *yud-hey-vav-hey*, which I have discovered fits marvelously into several of the trope melodies. But of course the *leyner* can choose to pronounce it as “God” or “Adonai”.

The English translations I mostly use (besides several scholarly commentaries) are the following:

Aryeh Kaplan, ‘The Living Torah’ (1981) (also my source for proper names & transliterations)
Richard Elliott Friedman, ‘The Bible With Sources Revealed’ (2003)
Everett Fox, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (1997)
The Stone Edition ‘Tanach’ (1996)
JPS ‘Hebrew-English Tanach’, (2nd Ed. 2000), *along with* Orlinsky, ‘Notes on the New Translation of the Torah’ (1969)
Robert Alter, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (2004)
Commentaries in the ‘Anchor Bible’ series
Rotherham, The Emphasized Bible (1902)
The Jerusalem Bible (1966) (also my source for topic headings)
The New King James Bible (1982)